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The pose of the figures is marked by a feminine, aristocratic grace, but this quality is epitomized, as it were, in the expression which illumines the Virgin's face. In the tender, serene smile with which the Virgin looks down at her baby, there is nothing of the cold austerity of the earlier Madonnas of the Romanesque period, nor of the merely pretty domesticity, too intimate sometimes for the dignity of the theme, which characterizes the later Gothic versions of the Divine Mother. In the art of the thirteenth century, the Virgin descends from her throne to earth, although she still wears her royal crown and forgets not the dignity which pertains to her high rank as the Queen of Heaven and the advocate of sinful man at the justice seat. If she permits herself to smile upon her child and to carry Him in her arms as any mother might, still she is ever mindful that she is blessed among women, and her love is spiritualized by reverence.

In the expression of this exquisite modesty of affection, our sculptor has been eminently successful. Equally successful is his solution of artistic problems. He simplifies form and movement until alone the essential, significant facts remain. Emphasized in this way, these truths are comprehended so readily by the spectator that an extraordinary impression of reality results. We have still to note another aspect of the artistic performance, the achievement of abstract beauty. Here we are not concerned with religious thought or with truth of representation, but with pure design. This is the beauty of rhythmic lines, of harmonious shapes, of the infinitely varied manifestations of order in design. This quality of abstract beauty, which characterizes Gothic art of the great period, is present to an unusual degree in the statue recently acquired by the Museum.

The statue may be dated toward the close of the thirteenth century. Its similarity in style to the *Vierge Dorée* of Amiens, and the fact that the statue, which for several years has been in private possession, came originally from the neighborhood of this celebrated cathedral, would

indicate that the sculptor was strongly influenced by the ateliers of Amiens. Sculpture of this period, particularly works of the highest order, are so rarely available that the Museum may be congratulated upon the acquisition of this masterpiece of French Gothic sculpture. A recent writer<sup>1</sup> has said, "A beautiful thing may be self-luminous with pleasure; or it may also glow with pleasure reflected from its truth or its morality." One would have to search far to find a more perfect illustration of this definition than the statue of the Virgin and Child which has occasioned these notes.

J. B.

## DRAWINGS BY LEONARDO DA VINCI ON EXHIBITION

IN Gallery 25 the Venetian and Bolognese drawings have been replaced by other drawings from the Museum collection. The present exhibition is chosen from the schools of Parma, Milan, and Genoa, and one wall is given over to the school of Raphael. Among these is the back of a nude man by Raphael himself, made during his stay in Florence, one of the drawings given by Cephass G. Thompson in 1887. In the Genoese group the series of twelve brilliant drawings by Luca Cambiaso is worthy of comment, as are many others of the exhibit; but the chief interest will be found in the two sheets of drawings by Leonardo da Vinci which were purchased in 1917 and are now shown for the first time.

In all probability these have always been attributed to this master, but they were unknown to any of the prominent authorities and consequently do not occur in any of the lists. Since 1801 their history is traceable. On the folder in which they were kept up to the time of their mounting for exhibition is an inscription in French stating that they were given to J. Allen Smith by J. G. Legrand, May, 1801.<sup>2</sup> The drawings were owned

<sup>1</sup> B. I. Gilman. *Museum Ideals*, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> *Souvenir d'amitié à J. Allen Smith par J. G. Legrand en floréal an 9*. No other information about either of these personages has as yet been found.

later by Thomas Sully, the painter, who presumably acquired them during one of his visits to Europe, either in 1809-10 or more probably in 1837-38, when he painted the portrait of Queen Victoria. At Sully's death the drawings, with other property

One of the sheets shows a pen and bistre drawing in a circle about  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches in diameter in which a sleeping man is seated under a tree while a snake and a lizard fight on the rock where he leans his head. It is an illustration for a bestiary, expound-



SHEET OF DRAWINGS BY LEONARDO DA VINCI

of the painter, passed to his grandson, Francis T. S. Darley,<sup>1</sup> who in his turn bequeathed the Leonardos to Thomas Nash, from whom the Museum acquired them.

<sup>1</sup>In 1914 Mr. Darley made a bequest to the Museum which included five paintings by Sully, among them the original sketch from life of Queen Victoria.

ing points of natural history or moral precepts, on which Leonardo was engaged—the subject of many manuscript pages preserved in the library of the Institute of France. The explanation of the theme of our drawing is given in the inscription above it in Leonardo's exquisite and peculiar right to left handwriting, which, literally translated, reads thus: The green

lizard faithful to the man, seeing him sleeping, fights with the snake. He sees that he can not conquer, runs over the face of the man and wakes him, so that the snake shall not harm the sleeping man.<sup>1</sup>

A companion work to ours, in the Bonnat Collection at Bayonne, is reproduced in Berenson's *Florentine Drawings*, vol. 2, page 86. It is also a drawing in a circle of about the same size and is in a similar style.

On the reverse of this sheet are some scratchy pen sketches for the setting of a masque or play, also notes and memoranda. There is an indication of a barrel-vaulted room with niches on the side walls, one marked with the word *annunziatori*, announcers, and at the end a seated figure in a mandorla from which flames radiate. The signification of another sketch to the right is not apparent. Above are some figures and writing. The writing gives a list of characters in a play founded on the story of Danaë, and the actors who were to take the parts. The whole inscription as far as it has been deciphered is as follows: Acrisio (Acrisius the father of Danaë), Giovanni Cristofano; (the next name undeciphered, then) Danaë, Francesco Romano; Mercury, Gianbattista —; Jove, Giovanni Francesco; Servant; Announcers of the Festival: those marvel at the new star and kneel down and these adore and kneel down and with music they finish the festival.<sup>2</sup>

The other sheet,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches by  $6\frac{3}{4}$  inches, is much more important. On it are drawings in pen and bistre of the Madonna

adoring the Child, conceived more or less in the spirit of the traditional Florentine treatment of the subject inherited from Fra Filippo Lippi. But in the sketches the old theme is humanized and at the same time glorified. In the writer's opinion, they mark the stage when the recognized rendering of the subject was being transformed in Leonardo's mind into the epoch-making composition of the Virgin of the Rocks.

The drawings are still far from the profound sentiment and full expression of the painting. The group in the center approaches its general aspect more nearly than the others, but in it the theme is still the usual one—the invention of the Madonna's posture, the one hand on Saint John's shoulder and the other in the grand gesture of consecration over the Christ Child, has not yet occurred to him, though the germ idea appears in the two outstretched arms. The divinity and reverence of the children are but half suggested in the drawing. In the arrangement of the Madonna's mantle pulled out over the right arm the drawing is like the picture; the definite indications of the folds suggest that the artist had arranged the drapery on a maquette or mannikin. The lower sketch, where the same pose and folds are shown from another viewpoint, bears out this idea. This lower drawing, in a space with an arched top, shows only the tiny Christ Child lying on the ground, and there is a background—a corner of a ruined room with a view of mountains seen through an arch. The other two drawings show different poses of the kneeling Virgin; in each only the Christ Child is shown with her; one has a suggestion of a pent-roofed shed in silver point for background. There are also two studies of babies in silver point lightly reinforced by pen and bistre.

Leonardo signed the contract in 1483 to paint the center picture of the altarpiece in the Church of San Francesco in Milan for the Confraternita della Concezione—this work was the Virgin of the Rocks. It was at the time of his first visit to Milan, and it is at about this time or somewhat before that I should venture to place the drawing, that is to say, not far from the

<sup>1</sup> Il ramarro fedele al omo vedēdo quello adormē tato cō batte che la bisscia esso vede nō la potere vincere core sopra il volto del omo e lo dessta accio che essa bisscia non offenda lo adormē tato homo.

<sup>2</sup> acrisio giā cristofano  
[next line undeciphered]  
danae fran cō romano  
mercurio gian battista da(?)  
giove giā fran cō(?)  
servo  
annatori della festa  
i quali si maravigliano  
della nova stella e s'inginocchioano  
e questa adorano e s'ingino  
chiano e cō musicha finisco  
no la festa

time of the numerous drawings for the Adoration and the Madonna with the Cat. The other sheet, the Allegory, would date as well from the first visit to Milan, I believe, if only from the masque memoranda on the reverse, as it is known that much of Leonardo's time in the service of Lodovico was spent in arranging such affairs.

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in the slaty stone. The background of the scroll design has been slightly cut away, not to form a relief but only to enhance the design by a ground of different texture. Besides that, there was a piece of fresco about 35 x 20 inches, cut in two pieces, which came from the same place.

According to the description given, the pieces came from a tomb in the Cheng tu-fu district, Province of Szechwan.



LINTEL FROM A CHINESE TOMB ENTRANCE

### A WEI TOMB ENTRANCE

THE early Chinese tomb entrance which has been put up in Room E9 of the Department of Far Eastern Art, was purchased from a dealer in Peking and is not the result of a scientific excavation. It would have been an advantage if the whole construction had been seen and drawn in its original place before removal, but this not being the case, we have to make the best of the description and explanations given by the dealer, which are fairly clear and agree amongst themselves.

We found in Peking two entrances or gateways, each consisting of a slightly flattened semicircular stone or lintel, resting on stone jambs and kept in place by dowels; one gate had a stone sill, the other sill had been left in place at the time of the excavation, it may have been too much damaged to take away. These lintels, jambs, and the one sill are decorated with a very elaborate design cut in outline

In a cave a wall had been built of hard blue-gray bricks, partitioning off a part intended for two tomb chambers, each of which had an entrance formed by the above-mentioned gates. These two entrances stood close together and between the two stone lintels was the fresco. The statement about the position of the fresco is borne out by the painted mouldings which follow the curves of the lintels.

The semicircular stones have curious square holes near the lower border. These were evidently always intended to be there, because they form part of the ornament, that is, decorative leaves surround the opening. What the use of these holes may have been is difficult to say; they look as if they once might have held the rings or supports of a curtain rod, the hanging closing the entrance to the tomb chamber.

The two stone entrances described are very similar; only the designs which cover the stones are different. The Museum